

**Working Papers on  
Contemporary Anti-Semitism**

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**CURRENT  
GERMAN ATTITUDES  
TOWARD JEWS  
AND OTHER MINORITIES**

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The figures for Holocaust denial in the United States cited in this pamphlet are inaccurate. Subsequent research sponsored by the American Jewish Committee indicates that only 1 percent of Americans consider it possible that the Holocaust never happened.

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## FOREWORD

Jennifer Golub's *Current German Attitudes Toward Jews and Other Minorities* is the seventeenth in a series of Working Papers on Contemporary Anti-Semitism published by the American Jewish Committee.

The Working Papers series seeks to enrich our understanding of contemporary anti-Semitism by inventorying current knowledge, providing analytical perspectives, and suggesting avenues for further research. Among the issues that call for analysis are the following: Is contemporary anti-Semitism a direct continuation of the Jew-hatred of the past, or is it in some sense a new phenomenon? Has the Holocaust finally delegitimated anti-Semitism, or has it merely driven it underground? What are the images of Jews that currently circulate in society? Are there population subgroups that are especially susceptible to anti-Semitism? How has the reality of the State of Israel affected expressions of anti-Semitism?

*Current German Attitudes Toward Jews and Other Minorities* serves as a follow-up to a 1990 probe of the subject, sponsored by the AJC and published under the title *United Germany and Jewish Concerns: Attitudes Toward Jews, Israel, and the Holocaust*. In reporting the findings of the new survey, Jennifer Golub makes it clear that more than one in five Germans express negative feelings toward Jews. Moreover, she indicates that while very high percentages of Germans have solid factual knowledge about the Holocaust, more than one in three fail to show interest in maintaining the memory of the Holocaust.

David Singer, *Director*  
*Department of Research and Publications*

## CURRENT GERMAN ATTITUDES TOWARD JEWS AND OTHER MINORITIES

In the immediate aftermath of German unification in October 1990, the American Jewish Committee sponsored a wide-ranging public opinion survey of German attitudes toward Jews.<sup>1</sup> The survey, which was carried out by the Emnid Institute, was the first ever to compare West German and East German views on Jews, Israel, and remembrance of the Holocaust. Another important dimension of the study was the inclusion of elite opinion as well as mass opinion in both the West and the East.

The data presented here are from a new American Jewish Committee-sponsored survey of German public opinion, conducted once again by the Emnid Institute. The new study repeats a number of questions from the 1990 probe, but also makes use of items that have appeared in two series of international surveys sponsored by the American Jewish Committee—one dealing with attitudes toward Jews and other minorities in various countries,<sup>2</sup> and the other with knowledge and remembrance of the Holocaust in different countries.<sup>3</sup> Among the specific areas covered in the new survey are feelings about

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<sup>1</sup> The findings are reported in detail in David A. Jodice, *United Germany and Jewish Concerns: Attitudes Toward Jews, Israel, and the Holocaust* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1991).

<sup>2</sup> The findings for the different countries appear in Renae Cohen and Jennifer Golub, *Attitudes Toward Jews in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1991); Tom W. Smith, *What Do Americans Think About Jews?* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1991); Lev Gudkov and Alex Levinson, *Attitudes Toward Jews in the Soviet Union* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1991); Fritz Karmasin, *Austrian Attitudes Toward Jews, Israel, and the Holocaust* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1992); Jennifer Golub, *British Attitudes Toward Jews and Other Minorities* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1993); and Lev Gudkov and Alex Levinson, *Attitudes Toward Jews in the Commonwealth of Independent States* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1994).

<sup>3</sup> The findings are reported in Jennifer Golub and Renae Cohen, *What Do Americans Know About the Holocaust?* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1993); Jennifer Golub

Jews and other minorities as potential neighbors; views as to whether different minorities provoke hostility by their behavior; perceptions of the degree of influence of various groups in society; views as to whether the German government is doing enough to combat violence against foreigners; the degree of anti-Semitism that exists in Germany today and its likely trajectory in the future; the willingness of Germans to accept a Jew as president of the country; factual knowledge about the Holocaust; the issue of keeping the memory of the Holocaust alive; and support for the establishment of a national Holocaust museum in Germany. While attitudes toward Jews form the crux of the survey, comparative data are also available for Gypsies, Turks, Vietnamese, Africans, Poles, and Arabs.

In conducting the new survey, the Emnid Institute interviewed face-to-face 1,434 respondents—including 992 former West Germans and 442 former East Germans—during January 12-31, 1994. Those interviewed constitute a representative national sample of German men and women, eighteen years of age and older. The findings can be reported for the sample as a whole, as well as by region (West and East), education, age, gender, religion, and political orientation. The margin of error for the total sample is plus or minus three percentage points.

### **Key Findings**

1. On a broad range of items measuring attitudes toward Jews, more than one in five Germans express negative feelings. Thus 20 percent of Germans believe that Jews have “too much influence” in German society; 22 percent of Germans “prefer not” to have Jews as neighbors; 28 percent of Germans “disapprove” of a Jew being nominated as a candidate for president of Germany; 31 percent of Germans maintain that Jews “exert too much influence on world events”; and 39 percent of Germans take the position that “Jews are exploiting the Holocaust for their own purposes.”

In contrast, only 8 percent of Germans maintain that Jews “behave in a manner which provokes hostility toward them in our country.”

2. While very high percentages of Germans exhibit solid factual knowl-

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and Renae Cohen, *What Do the British Know About the Holocaust?* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1993); and Jennifer Golub and Renae Cohen, *What Do the French Know About the Holocaust?* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1994).

edge about the Holocaust, more than one in three fail to show interest in maintaining the memory of the Holocaust. In terms of factual knowledge, 87 percent of Germans are able to indicate with some degree of accuracy what is meant by the term “the Holocaust”; 92 percent of Germans know that Auschwitz, Dachau, and Treblinka were concentration camps; and 91 percent of Germans are aware of the symbol—the yellow star—that Jews were forced to wear on their clothing during the Second World War. However, at the same time, 37 percent of Germans agree with the statement that “The Holocaust is not relevant today because it happened almost 50 years ago”; 37 percent of Germans “disapprove” of the “proposal . . . put forward to establish a national Holocaust memorial museum in Germany”; and 52 percent agree with the assertion that “Today, in the aftermath of German unification, we should not talk so much about the Holocaust, but should rather draw a line under the past.”

3. Former West Germans are more likely than former East Germans to express negative feelings toward Jews and to show a lack of desire to maintain the memory of the Holocaust. Thus 24 percent of Germans in the west think that Jews have “too much” influence in German society, in contrast to 8 percent of Germans in the east; 44 percent of Germans in the west believe that “Jews are exploiting the Holocaust for their own purposes,” in contrast to 19 percent of Germans in the east; and 30 percent of Germans in the west “disapprove” of a Jew being nominated as a candidate for president of Germany, in contrast to 20 percent of Germans in the east.

With regard to the Holocaust, 40 percent of Germans in the west maintain that “The Holocaust is not relevant today because it happened almost 50 years ago,” in contrast to 22 percent of Germans in the east; 56 percent of Germans in the west endorse the statement “Today, in the aftermath of German unification, we should not talk so much about the Holocaust, but should rather draw a line under the past,” in contrast to 36 percent of Germans in the east; and 42 percent of Germans in the west “disapprove” of the proposal to establish a national Holocaust museum in Germany, in contrast to 20 percent of Germans in the east.

4. Other minority groups in Germany—Gypsies, Turks, Vietnamese, Africans, Poles, and Arabs—are viewed more negatively than Jews. Thus, whereas 22 percent of Germans would “prefer not” having Jewish neighbors, 68 percent feel that way about Gypsies, 47 percent about Arabs, 39 percent about Poles, 37 percent about Africans, 36 percent about Turks, and 32 percent about Vietnamese. And while 8 percent of Germans say that Jews “behave in a

manner which provokes hostility toward them in our country," 40 percent feel that way about Gypsies, 22 percent about Turks, 20 percent about Poles, and 18 percent about Arabs; attitudes toward Africans (11 percent) and Vietnamese (9 percent) resemble those toward Jews on this item.

### **The Data in Review**

***Attitudes Toward Jews.*** On a broad range of items probing attitudes toward Jews, from 20 to 39 percent of Germans express negative feelings.

Thus 39 percent of Germans agree either strongly (15 percent) or somewhat (24 percent) that "Jews are exploiting the Holocaust for their own purposes"; 41 percent disagree either strongly (14 percent) or somewhat (27 percent); 20 percent don't know.

Thirty-one percent of Germans agree either strongly (10 percent) or somewhat (21 percent) that "Now, as in the past, Jews exert too much influence on world events," while 47 disagree either strongly (15 percent) or somewhat (32 percent); 21 percent don't know.

Twenty-eight percent of Germans would "disapprove" if "a party nominated a Jew as its candidate for president of Germany"; 9 percent would "approve"; 52 percent say that it would "make no difference"; and 10 percent don't know.

Twenty-two percent of Germans would "prefer not" to have Jews in their neighborhood, while 12 percent would "like to have" Jewish neighbors and 59 percent say it "wouldn't matter"; 6 percent don't know.

Twenty percent of Germans say that Jews have "too much" influence "in our society," while 9 percent say "too little" and 30 percent "the right amount"; 40 percent don't know.

In contrast, when asked whether "any of the following groups behave in a manner which provokes hostility toward them in our country," only 8 percent of Germans answer "yes" with regard to Jews, while 71 percent say "no" and 21 percent don't know.

A majority of Germans consider anti-Semitism in their country to be a problem, while a plurality believe that it will increase in the future. Thus 73 percent consider anti-Semitism in Germany either a "very serious problem" (26 percent) or "somewhat of a problem" (47 percent), while 18 percent consider it "not a problem at all"; 8 percent don't know. And "looking ahead over the next several years," 46 percent think that anti-Semitism in Germany will



increase either greatly (14 percent) or somewhat (32 percent); 32 percent think it will remain the same; 8 percent think it will decrease either greatly (2 percent) or somewhat (6 percent); and 14 percent don't know.

***Knowledge and Attitudes About the Holocaust.*** When asked in an open-ended format "As far as you know, what does the term 'the Holocaust' refer to?" 59 percent of Germans mention the extermination/murder/persecution/treatment of Jews by Hitler/Nazis/Germans; 23 percent mention the extermination/murder/persecution of Jews without tying these to Nazism or Germany; 5 percent give other relevant responses; 3 percent offer incorrect responses; and 10 percent indicate "don't know."

When asked in an open-ended format "From what you know or have heard, what were Auschwitz, Dachau, and Treblinka?" 92 percent of Germans answer "concentration camps," while 8 percent either say "don't know" or answer incorrectly.

When asked in an open-ended format what symbol Jews were forced to wear on their clothes during the Second World War, 91 percent of Germans answer yellow star, Jewish star, or star of David, while 9 percent either say "don't know" or answer incorrectly.

When asked in a multiple-choice format "Approximately how many Jews were killed in the Holocaust?" 36 percent of Germans cite "6 million," while 64 percent either say "don't know" or answer incorrectly.

When asked "In addition to the Jews, which of the following groups, if any, were persecuted by the Nazis?" 74 percent of Germans select "Gypsies," 68 percent "homosexuals," 43 percent "Poles," 7 percent "Aryans," and 24 percent other responses; 14 percent respond "don't know."

Fifty-two percent of Germans consider it "correct" and 34 percent "incorrect" that "today, in the aftermath of German unification, we should not talk so much about the Holocaust, but should rather draw a line under the past"; 14 percent don't know.

Thirty-seven percent of Germans agree either strongly (11 percent) or mostly (26 percent) that "the Holocaust is not relevant today because it happened almost 50 years ago," while 53 percent disagree either strongly (20 percent) or mostly (33 percent); 10 percent don't know.

Thirty-seven percent of Germans "disapprove" and 37 percent "approve" of the proposal that "has been put forward to establish a national Holocaust memorial museum in Germany"; 26 percent don't know.

When asked how important it is for Germans to know about and understand the Holocaust, 26 percent say it is either “not important” (7 percent) or “somewhat important” (19 percent), while 68 percent say it is either “essential” (18 percent) or “very important” (50 percent).

When told that “some people claim that the Nazi extermination of the Jews never happened” and asked whether they have ever heard this claim, 60 percent of Germans say that they have heard it, and 30 percent say that they have not; 9 percent don’t know.

When asked “Does it seem possible or does it seem impossible to you that the Nazi extermination of the Jews never happened?” 80 percent of Germans say “it seems impossible,” while 20 percent say either “it seems possible” (8 percent) or “don’t know” (13 percent).

***East-West Differences.*** Respondents living in former West Germany are more likely to express negative attitudes toward Jews than those living in former East Germany. Thus 44 percent of former West Germans agree that Jews are exploiting the Holocaust, as compared with 19 percent of former East Germans; 24 percent of former West Germans agree that Jews have too much influence “in our society,” as compared with 8 percent of former East Germans; 34 percent of former West Germans agree that “now, as in the past, Jews exert too much influence on world events,” as compared with 19 percent of former East Germans; and 30 percent of former West Germans would disapprove if a party nominated a Jewish presidential candidate, as compared with 20 percent of former East Germans. On a related item, 55 percent of former East Germans think that anti-Semitism in Germany will increase over the next few years, as compared with 45 percent of former West Germans.

Former West Germans are also less likely to favor remembrance and awareness of the Holocaust. Thus 56 percent of former West Germans believe that “we should not talk so much about the Holocaust, but should rather draw a line under the past,” as compared with 36 percent of former East Germans; 40 percent of former West Germans agree that the Holocaust is not relevant today, as compared with 22 percent of former East Germans; 42 percent of former West Germans disapprove of a proposal to establish a national Holocaust memorial museum in Germany, as compared with 20 percent of former East Germans; and 65 percent of former West Germans consider it either essential or very important for Germans to know about and understand the Holocaust, as compared with 75 percent of former East Germans.

Consistent differences in knowledge about the Holocaust do not emerge between former West Germans and former East Germans, but some differences do exist. Thus 55 percent of former East Germans recognize “Poles” as a group persecuted by the Nazis, as compared with 40 percent of former West Germans; 78 percent of former East Germans recognize “homosexuals” as a group persecuted by the Nazis, as compared with 66 percent of former West Germans; and 98 percent of former East Germans know what symbol Jews were forced to wear on their clothing during the Second World War, as compared with 90 percent of former West Germans. At the same time, 91 percent of former West Germans indicate with at least some accuracy what is meant by the term “the Holocaust,” as compared with 73 percent of former East Germans.

***Attitudes Toward Other Minorities.*** Germans tend to view other minorities more unfavorably than they do Jews. Thus, whereas 22 percent of Germans would “prefer not” having Jewish neighbors, 68 percent feel that way about Gypsies, 47 percent about Arabs, 39 percent about Poles, 37 percent about Africans, 36 percent about Turks, and 32 percent about Vietnamese. And while 8 percent of Germans say that Jews “behave in a manner which provokes hostility toward them in our country,” 40 percent feel that way about Gypsies, 22 percent about Turks, 20 percent about Poles, and 18 percent about Arabs; attitudes toward Africans (11 percent) and Vietnamese (9 percent) resemble those toward Jews on this item.

Thirty-eight percent of Germans say that the authorities are doing “too little” to “prevent violent attacks against foreigners in Germany”; 36 percent say that the authorities are doing “the right amount”; 8 percent say “too much”; and 18 percent don’t know.

### **Subgroup Differences**

Less educated Germans are somewhat less sympathetic toward Jews than the better educated. For example, 26 percent of those with a high-school education or less would prefer not having Jewish neighbors, as compared with 18 percent of those with at least some college; 34 percent of those with a high-school education or less “disagree” that Jews are exploiting the Holocaust for their own purposes, as compared with 50 percent of those with at least some college; and 43 percent of those with a high-school education or less “disagree” that Jews

have too much influence on world events, as compared with 53 percent of those with at least some college.

The less educated also express less support than the better educated for remembering the Holocaust. For example, 60 percent of those with a high-school education or less consider it either essential or very important for Germans to know about and understand the Holocaust, as compared with 76 percent of those with at least some college; 59 percent of those with a high-school education or less agree that “we should not talk so much about the Holocaust, but should rather draw a line under the past,” as compared with 45 percent of those with at least some college; and 32 percent of those with a high-school education or less approve of the idea of a national Holocaust memorial museum, as compared with 43 percent of those with at least some college.

Not surprisingly, the less educated are less knowledgeable than the better educated about the Holocaust. For example, 31 percent of those with a high-school education or less recognize “6 million” as the approximate number of Jews killed in the Holocaust, as compared with 42 percent of those with at least some college; 38 percent of those with a high-school education or less recognize “Poles” as a group persecuted by the Nazis, as compared with 49 percent of those with at least some college; and 54 percent of those with a high-school education or less give a completely correct answer when asked what is meant by the term “the Holocaust,” as compared with 63 percent of those with at least some college.

Older Germans are slightly less sympathetic toward Jews than those who are younger. For instance, 35 percent of those age fifty and older agree that Jews exert too much influence on world events, as compared with 25 percent of those age eighteen to twenty-nine; and 67 percent of those age fifty and older disagree that Jews behave in a manner that provokes hostility toward them in Germany, as compared with 78 percent of those age eighteen to twenty-nine.

Consistent differences in attitudes toward the Holocaust do not emerge on the basis of age, but on one item older Germans express less support for remembering the Holocaust than those who are younger. Thus 56 percent of those age fifty and older agree that “we should not talk so much about the Holocaust, but should rather draw a line under the past,” as compared with 46 percent of those age eighteen to twenty-nine. Consistent differences in knowledge about the Holocaust do not emerge on the basis of age.

Attitudes toward Jews are slightly more negative among German men than among German women. For example, 35 percent of men agree that Jews exert too much influence on world events, as compared with 28 percent of women; and 23 percent of men agree that Jews have too much influence in society, as compared with 18 percent of women.

German men also express slightly less support than German women for remembering the Holocaust. Thus 56 percent of men agree that “we should not talk so much about the Holocaust, but should rather draw a line under the past,” as compared with 48 percent of women; 33 percent of men approve of the idea of a national Holocaust memorial museum, as compared with 40 percent of women; and 40 percent of men agree that the Holocaust is irrelevant today, as compared with 34 percent of women. German men and women do not differ in terms of their knowledge about the Holocaust.

Consistent differences in attitudes toward Jews and in knowledge about the Holocaust do not emerge on the basis of political orientation. However, those intending to vote for the Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union (CDU/CSU) express somewhat less support for remembering the Holocaust than those intending to vote for the Social Democratic Party (SPD). For instance, 46 percent of CDU/CSU voters consider the Holocaust irrelevant today, as compared with 33 percent of SPD voters; 43 percent of CDU/CSU voters disapprove of the idea of a national Holocaust memorial museum, as compared with 34 percent of SPD voters; and 59 percent of CDU/CSU voters agree that “we should not talk so much about the Holocaust, but should rather draw a line under the past,” as compared with 51 percent of SPD voters.

Consistent differences in attitudes toward Jews and on the Holocaust-related items do not emerge on the basis of religion.

### **Comparisons Between 1990 and 1994 Surveys**

The new survey included five items that were asked in the American Jewish Committee's 1990 survey in Germany—two addressing attitudes toward Jews, one probing the willingness to remember the Holocaust, and two addressing perceptions of anti-Semitism. Two of the three attitudinal questions show a slight improvement. At the same time, concern about anti-Semitism in Germany has increased.

Thirty-one percent of Germans in the new survey agree that “now, as in

the past, Jews exert too much influence on world events,” as compared with 38 percent in the 1990 survey. However, 39 percent of Germans in both surveys agreed that “Jews are exploiting the Holocaust for their own purposes.”

Fifty-two percent of Germans in the 1994 survey agree that “today, in the aftermath of German unification, we should not talk so much about the Holocaust, but should rather draw a line under the past.” On a similar item in the 1990 poll, 58 percent of Germans agreed that “with the opening of a new chapter in German history, 45 years after the end of the Second World War, it is time to put the memory of the Holocaust behind us.”

When asked whether “anti-Semitism in Germany is a very serious problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem at all,” 26 percent of Germans in the current survey call it a “very serious problem,” as compared with 14 percent of those in 1990. Likewise, 46 percent of Germans in the new poll think that anti-Semitism in Germany will increase over the next few years, as compared with 37 percent of those in 1990.

### **Comparisons with Other Countries**

Many items in the new German survey can be compared with identical or similar items in AJC-conducted polls in other countries.

***Attitudes Toward Jews.*** In a comparison of attitudes toward Jews, the results are mixed. On the one hand, when asked how much influence Jews have in society, Germans are more likely than respondents from most of the other countries to say “too much” (Germany, 20 percent; Belarus, 15 percent; Slovakia, 14 percent; Kazakhstan, 13 percent; Azerbaijan, 11 percent; Russia, 11 percent; Lithuania, 11 percent; Ukraine, 9 percent; Latvia, 8 percent; Uzbekistan, 5 percent; Estonia, 2 percent; Moldova, 1 percent), although they are about equally likely to say “too much” as Hungarians (17 percent) and Americans (21 percent), and somewhat less likely to do so than Poles (26 percent) and Austrians (28 percent).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Germans, Austrians, Hungarians, and Poles were asked “Do you feel that the following groups have too much influence, too little influence, or the right amount of influence in our society?” Respondents from the former Soviet Union were asked “How much influence do the following groups have in our society?” with the following response alternatives: “too much,” “too little,” “a reasonable amount.” Slovaks were told “Some groups have considerable influence on life in Slovakia, while the influence

However, for two items Germans fall in the middle range with regard to hostility toward Jews. Thus, when asked whether Jews exert “too much influence on world events,” Germans are somewhat less likely to agree than respondents from three other countries (Germany, 31 percent; Austria, 37 percent; Kazakhstan, 37 percent; Azerbaijan, 42 percent); about as likely to agree as those from four other countries (Lithuania, 34 percent; Latvia, 31 percent; Belarus, 29 percent; Estonia, 27 percent); and more likely to agree than those from four other countries (Uzbekistan, 26 percent; Russia, 22 percent; Ukraine, 17 percent; Moldova, 12 percent).

Similarly, Germans are less likely to dislike the idea of having Jewish neighbors than respondents from six other countries (Germany, 22 percent; Slovakia, 27 percent; Latvia, 28 percent; Austria, 31 percent; Uzbekistan, 39 percent; Poland, 40 percent; Lithuania, 40 percent); about as likely to dislike the idea as those from five other countries (Russia, 24 percent; Ukraine, 23 percent; Estonia, 22 percent; Kazakhstan, 21 percent; Belarus, 20 percent); and more likely to dislike the idea than those from five other countries (Hungary, 17 percent; Azerbaijan, 16 percent; Argentina, 8 percent; Moldova, 5 percent; United States, 5 percent).<sup>5</sup>

On two items, Germans are among the least likely to express hostility toward Jews. When asked whether Jews “behave in a manner which provokes hostility toward them in our country,” 8 percent of Germans and 6 percent of Hungarians answer “yes.” In contrast, 19 percent of Poles answer “yes” to the same question; 15 percent of Argentineans say “yes” when asked “As compared with other people in Argentina today, do Jews . . . behave in such a way as to provoke hostility?”; and 14 percent of Austrians mention Jews when

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of other groups is smaller than they deserve. Evaluate the influence of the following groups. . . . Jews: too much, the right amount, too little.” Americans were told “Some people think that certain groups have too much influence in American life and politics, while other people feel that certain groups don’t have as much influence as they deserve. . . . For each group I read to you, just tell me the number of the statement that best says how you feel. . . . Jews: too much, about right, too little.”

<sup>5</sup> Germans, Poles, and Hungarians were asked “How do you feel about having Jews in your neighborhood? Would you like to have some Jewish neighbors, wouldn’t it make any difference to you, or would you prefer not to have any Jewish neighbors?” Austrians, Argentineans, and respondents from the former Soviet Union were asked questions that were virtually identical to the above. Slovaks were asked, for each of various ethnic groups, to “Specify . . . if you would like to have a member of the group as a neighbor,” with the following response alternatives: “Yes, I would”; “I don’t care, it doesn’t matter to me”; “I’d rather not”; “I definitely wouldn’t like to.” Americans were asked, for each of various groups, “whether you would or would not like to have them as neighbors.”



asked “Which of the following groups behave in a manner which provokes hostility in our country?”

Moreover, when asked “If a party nominated a Jew as its candidate for president of Germany, would you approve, disapprove, or would the candidate’s Jewishness make no difference to you?” 28 percent of Germans say they would disapprove. In contrast, when asked “What would be your attitude if a Jew became president of your republic?” with the response alternatives “I have nothing against it” and “I wouldn’t like it,” 77 percent of those in Azerbaijan say they wouldn’t like it, as do 76 percent of those in Uzbekistan, 70 percent of those in Lithuania, 67 percent of those in Belarus, 63 percent of those in Latvia, 61 percent of those in Estonia, 57 percent of those in Russia, 53 percent of those in Ukraine, and 47 percent of those in Moldova. In addition, when Argentineans are asked “Would you or would you not vote for a presidential candidate who was Jewish?” 41 percent say they would not. However, when Americans are asked “If your party nominated a generally well-qualified man for President and he happened to be a Jew would you vote for him?” only 6 percent say they would not.

Germans are more likely than respondents in Poland, Austria, and Hungary to consider anti-Semitism a serious problem and to think that it will increase. Thus 26 percent of Germans describe anti-Semitism in their country as a “very serious problem,” as compared with 10 percent of Poles, 9 percent of Austrians, and 7 percent of Hungarians. Moreover, 46 percent of Germans think that anti-Semitism in their country will increase over the next few years, as compared with 24 percent of Austrians, 25 percent of Hungarians, and 17 percent of Poles.

***Knowledge and Attitudes About the Holocaust.*** With regard to six facts about the Holocaust, Germans are more knowledgeable about three of them than respondents in France, Great Britain, and the United States. Thus 59 percent of Germans give a completely correct answer when asked what the term “the Holocaust” refers to, as compared with 35 percent of the French, 33 percent of the British, and 24 percent of Americans. Seventy-four percent of Germans recognize “Gypsies” as a group persecuted by the Nazis, as compared with 57 percent of the French, 51 percent of the British, and 26 percent of Americans. In addition, 68 percent of Germans recognize “homosexuals” as a group persecuted by the Nazis, as compared with 33 percent of the French, 51 percent of the British, and 25 percent of Americans.



Moreover, Germans—together with the French—show more knowledge than Britons and Americans on two additional items. Thus 92 percent of Germans and 90 percent of the French identify Auschwitz, Dachau, and Treblinka as concentration camps, as compared with 76 percent of the British and 62 percent of Americans. And 91 percent of Germans and 88 percent of the French correctly identify the symbol (the yellow star) that Jews were forced to wear during World War II, as compared with 56 percent of the British and 42 percent of Americans. (Germans, unlike respondents from the other countries, were asked both questions in an open-ended rather than multiple-choice format.)

However, Germans—together with Americans—are less likely than the French and the British to know that approximately 6 million Jews were killed in the Holocaust (Germany, 36 percent; United States, 35 percent; France, 45 percent; Great Britain, 41 percent).

Germans express less support for remembrance of the Holocaust than respondents in Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, France, Great Britain, and the United States, and about as much support for this as Austrians. Thus 52 percent of Germans agree that “Today, in the aftermath of German unification, we should not talk so much about the Holocaust, but should rather draw a line under the past”; 53 percent of Austrians agree that “Now, 45 years after the end of the Second World War, it is time to put the memory of the Holocaust behind us”; but in contrast, 38 percent of Slovaks, 28 percent of Hungarians, and 13 percent of Poles agree that “it is time to put the memory of the Holocaust . . . behind us.”

Similarly, 37 percent of Germans agree that “The Holocaust is not relevant today because it happened almost 50 years ago,” as compared with 20 percent of the French, 18 percent of the British, and 21 percent of Americans. And 18 percent of Germans consider it “essential” for their compatriots “to know about and understand the Holocaust,” as compared with 33 percent of both the British and Americans and 45 percent of the French.

Germans are slightly less likely than the French, and more likely than Americans and the British, to have heard the claim “that the Nazi extermination of the Jews never happened” (Germany, 60 percent; France, 67 percent; United States, 38 percent; Great Britain, 50 percent).

When asked “Does it seem possible or does it seem impossible to you that the Nazi extermination of the Jews never happened?” Germans are less likely than Americans, and more likely than the British and the French, to say

either "it seems possible" or "don't know" (Germany: seems possible, 8 percent; don't know, 13 percent; United States: seems possible, 22 percent; don't know, 12 percent; Great Britain: seems possible, 7 percent; don't know, 9 percent; France: seems possible, 5 percent; don't know, 1 percent).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> In January 1994 the Gallup organization fielded two additional versions of the "Holocaust denial" question in the United States. Responding to the first version, 9 percent of Americans indicated that they "doubt" the Holocaust "actually happened." Responding to the second version, 79 percent of Americans stated that the Holocaust did "definitely happen," leaving 21 percent expressing various degrees of uncertainty.

# TABLES

**Table 1a**

**“How do you feel about having [GROUP] in your neighborhood?  
 Would you like to have some [GROUP] neighbors, wouldn’t it make  
 any difference to you or would you prefer not to have any [GROUP]  
 neighbors?” (in percents)**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Like to have</b>	<b>Wouldn’t matter</b>	<b>Prefer not</b>	<b>DK/ NA</b>
West Germans	19	69	11	1
East Germans	23	63	11	4
Gypsies	2	23	68	6
Arabs	5	40	47	8
Vietnamese	9	52	32	7
Turks	10	48	36	6
Poles	8	47	39	6
Africans	8	49	37	6
Jews	12	59	22	6

Note: West German respondents were asked about East Germans; East German respondents were asked about West Germans.

**Table 1b**

**"How do you feel about having [GROUP] in your neighborhood? Would you like to have some [GROUP] neighbors, wouldn't it make any difference to you or would you prefer not to have any [GROUP] neighbors?"(Jews) (in percents)**

Subgroup	Jews			
	Like to have	Wouldn't matter	Prefer not	DK/NA
Total	12	59	22	6
Region				
Former W. Ger.	13	59	22	7
Former E. Ger.	12	63	21	5
Sex				
Men	12	57	24	7
Women	13	61	20	6
Age				
18-29	16	59	19	7
30-49	13	61	21	6
50+	10	59	25	6
Education				
≤Secondary	11	57	26	7
>Secondary	14	63	18	5
Religion				
Protestant	12	58	24	7
Catholic	13	61	17	8
None	12	60	25	3
Vote intention				
CDU/CSU	10	59	23	8
SPD	12	60	20	7

**Table 2a**

**“Do any of the following groups behave in a manner which provokes hostility toward them in our country?”**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>DK/ NA</b>
West Germans	9	81	9
East Germans	8	81	12
Gypsies	40	41	19
Arabs	18	56	26
Vietnamese	9	69	22
Turks	22	59	19
Poles	20	58	22
Africans	11	64	25
Jews	8	71	21

Note: West German respondents were asked about East Germans; East German respondents were asked about West Germans.

**Table 2b**

**“Do any of the following groups behave in a manner which provokes hostility toward them in our country?” (Jews) (in percents)**

Subgroup	Jews		DK/ NA
	Yes	No	
Total	8	71	21
Region			
Former W. Ger.	8	69	22
Former E. Ger.	6	75	18
Sex			
Men	10	71	19
Women	6	70	24
Age			
18-29	6	78	16
30-49	8	70	21
50+	9	67	24
Education			
≤Secondary	10	64	26
>Secondary	6	77	17
Religion			
Protestant	8	70	21
Catholic	7	68	25
None	9	76	15
Vote intention			
CDU/CSU	9	71	21
SPD	7	73	19

Table 3

**“Are the authorities doing the right amount, too much, or too little to prevent violent attacks against foreigners in Germany?” (in percents)**

Subgroup	Right amount	Too much	Too little	DK/NA
Total	36	8	38	18
Region				
Former W. Ger.	40	9	32	19
Former E. Ger.	21	6	58	15
Sex				
Men	40	9	36	14
Women	32	7	39	21
Age				
18-29	31	10	44	15
30-49	31	9	40	20
50+	42	7	32	19
Education				
≤Secondary	39	8	33	20
>Secondary	33	8	43	16
Religion				
Protestant	35	8	36	21
Catholic	45	9	29	17
None	23	8	55	15
Vote intention				
CDU/CSU	44	9	29	18
SPD	36	8	40	16



**Table 4a**

**“Do you feel that the following groups have too much influence, too little influence or the right amount of influence in our society?” (in percents)**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Too much</b>	<b>Too little</b>	<b>Right amount</b>	<b>DK/NA</b>
Big business	65	6	18	11
Labor unions	31	29	31	10
The media	57	8	27	8
Banks	62	5	21	12
Americans	30	6	37	27
Japanese	30	6	31	33
The churches	34	16	31	19
Jews	20	9	30	40

**Table 4b**

**“Do you feel that the following groups have too much influence, too little influence or the right amount of influence in our society?”**

**(Jews) (in percents)**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Jews</b>			
	<b>Too much</b>	<b>Too little</b>	<b>Right amount</b>	<b>DK/ NA</b>
Total	20	9	30	40
Region				
Former W. Ger.	24	8	32	36
Former E. Ger.	8	12	24	56
Sex				
Men	23	8	33	37
Women	18	10	29	43
Age				
18-29	18	11	29	43
30-49	22	10	25	43
50+	20	7	36	37
Education				
≤Secondary	22	8	30	41
>Secondary	18	10	31	40
Religion				
Protestant	24	8	26	42
Catholic	19	9	37	35
None	16	10	29	45
Vote intention				
CDU/CSU	21	7	32	40
SPD	20	7	35	38

**Table 5**

**"Do you think that anti-Semitism in Germany is currently a very serious problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem at all?"  
(in percents)**

<b>Subgroup</b>	<b>Very serious problem</b>	<b>Somewhat of a problem</b>	<b>Not a problem at all</b>	<b>DK/NA</b>
Total	26	47	18	8
Region				
Former W. Ger.	25	47	19	8
Former E. Ger.	29	48	14	9
Sex				
Men	27	46	20	7
Women	25	48	16	10
Age				
18-29	31	49	12	7
30-49	23	50	19	8
50+	26	45	21	9
Education				
≤Secondary	23	47	19	10
>Secondary	29	48	17	6
Religion				
Protestant	27	47	18	8
Catholic	23	48	21	8
None	31	46	15	9
Vote intention				
CDU/CSU	20	51	20	9
SPD	26	47	18	8

**Table 6**

**"Looking ahead over the next several years, do you think that anti-Semitism in Germany will increase greatly, increase somewhat, remain the same, decrease somewhat, or decrease greatly?" (in percents)**

Subgroup	Increase greatly	Increase somewhat	Remain the same	Decrease somewhat	Decrease greatly	DK/NA
Total	14	32	32	6	2	14
Region						
Former W. Ger.	14	31	32	6	2	15
Former E. Ger.	16	39	31	4	2	9
Sex						
Men	15	29	37	6	2	11
Women	14	35	28	5	2	16
Age						
18-29	18	38	22	7	2	12
30-49	14	31	34	6	2	12
50+	12	30	35	4	2	16
Education						
≤Secondary	15	28	33	5	2	17
>Secondary	13	37	31	6	2	10
Religion						
Protestant	15	28	32	7	3	15
Catholic	10	34	34	6	2	14
None	20	37	29	2	1	10
Vote intention						
CDU/CSU	9	28	38	8	4	14
SPD	15	32	35	5	1	12

Table 7

**"If a party nominated a Jew as its candidate for president of Germany, would you approve, disapprove, or would the candidate's Jewishness make no difference to you?" (in percents)**

Subgroup	Ap- prove	Disap- prove	Makes no difference	DK/ NA
Total	9	28	52	10
Region				
Former W. Ger.	9	30	50	12
Former E. Ger.	12	20	63	5
Sex				
Men	9	30	52	9
Women	10	26	53	11
Age				
18-29	14	25	51	11
30-49	10	28	53	9
50+	6	30	53	11
Education				
≤Secondary	6	32	49	13
>Secondary	13	24	56	7
Religion				
Protestant	11	28	51	11
Catholic	5	31	51	13
None	13	23	58	6
Vote intention				
CDU/CSU	6	29	54	11
SPD	9	28	52	11

**Table 8**

**"Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with this statement: 'Now, as in the past, Jews exert too much influence on world events.'" (in percents)**

<b>Subgroup</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Somewhat agree</b>	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>DK/NA</b>
Total	10	21	32	15	21
Region					
Former W. Ger.	11	23	32	14	19
Former E. Ger.	3	16	33	19	29
Sex					
Men	12	23	32	16	18
Women	8	20	32	15	24
Age					
18-29	5	20	30	22	23
30-49	11	18	33	15	22
50+	11	24	33	12	19
Education					
≤Secondary	11	22	33	10	24
>Secondary	9	20	32	21	18
Religion					
Protestant	12	21	33	15	19
Catholic	8	25	32	14	22
None	8	17	33	18	24
Vote intention					
CDU/CSU	9	20	38	12	22
SPD	10	21	33	16	20

**Table 9**

**"As far as you know, what does the term 'the Holocaust' refer to?"**  
**(in percents) (OPEN-ENDED WITH CODES)**

Subgroup	Extermination/ murder/perse- cution/treat- ment of Jews by Hitler/ Nazis/Germans	Extermination/ murder/ persecution of Jews	Other relevant responses	Others	DK/ NA
Total	59	23	5	3	10
Region					
Former W. Ger.	59	27	5	3	6
Former E. Ger.	58	11	4	2	25
Sex					
Men	61	22	5	4	8
Women	57	25	5	1	12
Age					
18-29	59	20	5	2	13
30-49	62	22	4	2	9
50+	56	26	5	3	9
Education					
≤Secondary	54	23	7	3	13
>Secondary	63	24	3	2	7
Religion					
Protestant	56	25	6	3	10
Catholic	60	26	4	2	7
None	60	16	5	2	16
Vote intention					
CDU/CSU	55	27	4	3	11
SPD	61	24	5	4	7

Note: After answering this question, all respondents were told the following: "To be precise, the Holocaust was the Nazi extermination of Jews during the Second World War."

**Table 10**

**“From what you know or have heard, what were Auschwitz, Dachau, and Treblinka?” (in percents) (OPEN-ENDED)**

Subgroup	Concentration camps	Other responses	DK/NA
Total	92	3	5
Region			
Former W. Ger.	91	4	5
Former E. Ger.	95	3	2
Sex			
Men	93	3	4
Women	91	4	5
Age			
18-29	95	2	3
30-49	91	3	6
50+	91	5	5
Education			
≤Secondary	89	4	7
>Secondary	95	3	2
Religion			
Protestant	92	2	6
Catholic	91	4	5
None	94	4	2
Vote intention			
CDU/CSU	91	3	6
SPD	92	4	4



**Table 11**

**"Some people claim that the Nazi extermination of the Jews never happened. Have you ever heard this claim, or not?" (in percents)**

<b>Subgroup</b>	<b>Heard this claim</b>	<b>Have not heard this claim</b>	<b>DK/NA</b>
Total	60	30	9
Region			
Former W. Ger.	62	29	9
Former E. Ger.	56	34	10
Sex			
Men	64	27	9
Women	57	34	9
Age			
18-29	60	30	10
30-49	58	34	8
50+	63	28	9
Education			
≤Secondary	53	34	12
>Secondary	68	26	6
Religion			
Protestant	62	27	10
Catholic	55	36	9
None	65	27	8
Vote intention			
CDU/CSU	62	29	10
SPD	56	34	10

**Table 12****"Does it seem possible or does it seem impossible to you that the Nazi extermination of the Jews never happened?" (in percents)**

<b>Subgroup</b>	<b>It seems possible</b>	<b>It seems impossible</b>	<b>DK/NA</b>
Total	8	80	13
Region			
Former W. Ger.	7	79	14
Former E. Ger.	10	82	8
Sex			
Men	10	78	12
Women	6	81	13
Age			
18-29	9	79	12
30-49	8	77	15
50+	7	82	11
Education			
≤Secondary	11	73	15
>Secondary	4	86	10
Religion			
Protestant	8	77	15
Catholic	7	82	11
None	9	81	10
Vote intention			
CDU/CSU	9	81	10
SPD	8	78	14

**Table 13****"Approximately how many Jews were killed in the Holocaust?" (in percents)**

<b>Subgroup</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>1 mil-lion</b>	<b>2 mil-lion</b>	<b>6 mil-lion</b>	<b>20 mil-lion</b>	<b>DK/NA</b>
Total	2	5	13	15	36	8	21
Region							
Former W. Ger.	1	5	12	14	36	9	23
Former E. Ger.	3	5	16	19	36	6	16
Sex							
Men	3	5	12	15	39	7	19
Women	1	5	14	15	33	10	23
Age							
18-29	3	5	12	15	33	10	22
30-49	1	5	13	13	37	9	21
50+	1	5	13	16	37	6	21
Education							
≤Secondary	2	5	15	15	31	5	26
>Secondary	2	4	10	14	42	11	16
Religion							
Protestant	1	4	11	13	37	9	25
Catholic	2	7	15	15	37	7	19
None	2	5	13	19	35	9	17
Vote intention							
CDU/CSU	1	6	12	16	39	6	20
SPD	3	3	12	15	39	9	20

**Table 14**

**"In addition to the Jews, which of the following groups, if any, were persecuted by the Nazis?" (in percents)**

Subgroup	Gypsies	Poles	Homo- sexuals	Aryans	Other	DK/ NA
Total	74	43	68	7	24	14
Region						
Former W. Ger.	75	40	66	6	21	15
Former E. Ger.	70	55	78	8	37	8
Sex						
Men	74	42	69	6	23	14
Women	74	43	68	8	25	13
Age						
18-29	76	50	73	4	27	13
30-49	70	40	68	7	25	14
50+	76	41	66	8	23	14
Education						
≤Secondary	69	38	61	7	16	17
>Secondary	79	49	75	6	33	9
Religion						
Protestant	75	41	68	7	22	15
Catholic	72	39	62	6	18	15
None	76	53	78	8	39	9
Vote intention						
CDU/CSU	72	40	63	8	16	16
SPD	74	40	70	9	26	14

**Table 15**

**“Many Jews in Europe were forced to wear a symbol on their clothes during the Second World War. What was it?” (in percents) (OPEN-ENDED)**

Subgroup	Yellow star/ Jewish star/ star of David	Other responses	DK/ NA
Total	91	1	8
Region			
Former W. Ger.	90	1	9
Former E. Ger.	98	1	1
Sex			
Men	91	2	7
Women	92	0	8
Age			
18-29	88	1	11
30-49	91	1	8
50+	93	2	5
Education			
≤Secondary	89	1	10
>Secondary	94	1	5
Religion			
Protestant	89	1	10
Catholic	91	2	7
None	94	1	5
Vote intention			
CDU/CSU	94	1	5
SPD	89	1	10

**Table 16**

**“Please tell me whether you strongly agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or strongly disagree: ‘The Holocaust is not relevant today because it happened almost 50 years ago.’”(in percents)**

<b>Subgroup</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Mostly agree</b>	<b>Mostly disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>DK/NA</b>
Total	11	26	33	20	10
Region					
Former W. Ger.	12	28	32	17	10
Former E. Ger.	5	17	37	31	11
Sex					
Men	12	28	30	20	10
Women	10	24	35	20	11
Age					
18-29	8	28	31	24	9
30-49	12	22	34	21	11
50+	11	28	33	17	11
Education					
≤Secondary	12	29	34	13	12
>Secondary	10	23	31	28	8
Religion					
Protestant	13	24	32	19	13
Catholic	11	33	32	16	8
None	7	19	35	30	10
Vote intention					
CDU/CSU	15	31	32	14	7
SPD	11	22	37	19	11

**Table 17**

**"A proposal has been put forward to establish a national Holocaust memorial museum in Germany. Do you approve or disapprove of this idea?" (in percents)**

<b>Subgroup</b>	<b>Ap- prove</b>	<b>Disap- prove</b>	<b>DK/ NA</b>
Total	37	37	26
Region			
Former W. Ger.	33	42	25
Former E. Ger.	52	20	28
Sex			
Men	33	40	27
Women	40	35	24
Age			
18-29	36	38	26
30-49	36	38	26
50+	38	37	25
Education			
≤Secondary	32	40	28
>Secondary	43	34	23
Religion			
Protestant	36	35	29
Catholic	32	46	22
None	46	28	26
Vote intention			
CDU/CSU	36	43	21
SPD	37	34	29

**Table 18**

**"In your view, how important is it for Germans to know about and understand the Holocaust—is it essential, very important, only somewhat important, or not important?" (in percents)**

Subgroup	Essen- tial	Very important	Only somewhat important	Not important	DK/ NA
Total	18	50	19	7	7
Region					
Former W. Ger.	17	48	20	7	8
Former E. Ger.	20	55	14	6	5
Sex					
Men	19	46	19	8	8
Women	16	52	19	5	7
Age					
18-29	21	48	16	7	8
30-49	18	47	20	6	8
50+	16	52	20	6	6
Education					
≤Secondary	13	47	23	8	9
>Secondary	23	53	15	5	5
Religion					
Protestant	17	49	18	8	8
Catholic	14	52	23	5	7
None	26	48	14	6	6
Vote intention					
CDU/CSU	15	48	26	8	3
SPD	19	51	16	6	7



**Table 19**

**“Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement: ‘Jews are exploiting the National Socialist Holocaust for their own purposes.’” (in percents)**

<b>Subgroup</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Somewhat agree</b>	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>DK/ NA</b>
Total	15	24	27	14	20
Region					
Former W. Ger.	18	26	25	13	18
Former E. Ger.	4	15	36	20	24
Sex					
Men	18	23	26	14	19
Women	13	24	29	14	21
Age					
18-29	13	22	26	18	22
30-49	15	23	31	12	19
50+	17	25	26	14	19
Education					
≤Secondary	19	23	22	12	25
>Secondary	11	25	33	17	14
Religion					
Protestant	17	23	27	15	18
Catholic	17	24	28	10	21
None	9	25	28	19	19
Vote intention					
CDU/CSU	14	20	30	15	21
SPD	13	27	28	15	17

**Table 20**

**“Recently someone said: ‘Today, in the aftermath of German unification, we should not talk so much about the Holocaust, but should rather draw a line under the past.’ Would you say this is correct or incorrect?” (in percents)**

<b>Subgroup</b>	<b>Cor- rect</b>	<b>Incor- rect</b>	<b>DK/ NA</b>
Total	52	34	14
Region			
Former W. Ger.	56	29	15
Former E. Ger.	36	54	10
Sex			
Men	56	32	12
Women	48	37	15
Age			
18-29	46	37	17
30-49	51	36	13
50+	56	32	12
Education			
≤Secondary	59	26	16
>Secondary	45	43	12
Religion			
Protestant	53	32	15
Catholic	56	31	13
None	44	44	12
Vote intention			
CDU/CSU	59	29	12
SPD	51	35	15



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